

### *Home Star Bill Creates Local Jobs with Immediate Rebates for Home Improvements that Lower Energy Costs, Reduce Dependence on Oil from Hostile Nations*

*Washington, DC* - With home improvement season swinging into full gear, families may soon have an added incentive to invest in energy saving upgrades, which reduce energy bills and lessen our nation's dependence on oil from hostile nations. Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today voted to pass the Home Star Energy Retrofit Act, which provides up-front rebates of up to \$3,000 for energy-efficiency home renovations.

"The Home Star program, which I co-sponsored and voted for today, helps families reduce their energy bills by providing immediate rebates for home renovations that improve energy efficiency," said Hinchey. "Even though energy-saving home improvements reduce utility bills over the long run, they are often out of reach for many families because of the high up-front costs involved. This new initiative will help more New Yorkers save money with immediate rebates and reduce their carbon footprint, creating thousands of new jobs in the process."

The Home Star bill provides two options for attaining up-front energy efficiency rebates. The Silver Star program provides rebates at the time of sale for specific energy-saving investments, including insulation, duct sealing, energy efficient windows and doors, air sealing and water heaters. Homeowners will receive up to \$1,500 per improvement with a maximum rebate of \$3,000. The Gold Star program rewards homeowners who conduct a comprehensive energy audit and implement measures to reduce energy use. Under this option, consumers will receive \$3,000 for a demonstrated savings of 20 percent, plus an additional \$1,000 for each additional 5 percent energy savings up to \$8,000. Rebates for both programs may not exceed 50 percent of the total project cost.

With high unemployment in the U.S. construction industry, the Home Star bill also provides a needed boost. Economists estimate that the market-based incentives in the program would create 168,000 American jobs in construction, manufacturing and retail industries. More than 90 percent of the materials and products used in eligible measures are made in the U.S. In the long run, it helps rebuild the foundation of our economy by encouraging American innovation and entrepreneurship in the growing clean energy industry.

As a result of the program, over 3 million American families stand to save up to \$500 per year on their energy bills, totaling \$9 billion over the next ten years. The legislation will also help reduce our dependence on oil imported from hostile nations by cutting the equivalent of almost 7 million barrels of heating oil next year.

The bipartisan legislation enjoys broad support from business, labor, environmental and consumer groups – including President Obama, the National Association of Manufacturers, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Home Builders, Owens Corning, Home Depot, Laborers' International Union of North America, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Home Star Coalition with over 1000 business and organization members nationwide.

Hinchey also strongly supported and voted for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which made job-creating investments in a clean energy future and provided tax rebates for energy efficiency improvements. He was also a co-sponsor of clean energy jobs legislation that would lessen carbon pollution, reduce oil imports and ensure America's competitiveness in the emerging new energy economy.